

Top 10 Best Football Players in India to Watch in 2025



Football in India is experiencing a remarkable surge in popularity, fueled by the Indian Super League (ISL), international exposure, and the passion of millions of fans. As we move into 2025, the spotlight shines on the best football players in India who are redefining the sport and inspiring a new generation. From seasoned legends to rising stars, this blog explores the best football player in India and other top talents making waves in 2025. Let's dive into the list of the [top 10 Indian footballers](#) you need to know about!

Why Indian Football Is Trending in 2025

The global appeal of football, amplified by events like the FIFA World Cup and the AFC Asian Cup, has ignited a passion for the sport in India. With over 100 million viewers tuning into the FIFA World Cup 2022, the Indian Super League has further elevated the game's status, bringing international talent to Indian shores and giving local players a platform to shine. In 2025, Indian football is trending due to:

- Improved national team rankings: India's steady climb in FIFA rankings.
- Emerging young talents: Players breaking through in the ISL and international stages.
- AIFF Awards 2024-25: Recognizing outstanding performers in Indian football.

Now, let's meet the best football players in India who are driving this football renaissance.

1. Sunil Chhetri – The Undisputed Best Football Player in India

No discussion about the best football player in India is complete without mentioning Sunil Chhetri. Often called “Captain Fantastic,” Chhetri has been the face of Indian football for over a decade. As of 2025, the Bengaluru FC star remains a prolific goal-scorer, holding the record as India's all-time leading scorer with over 93 international goals. His leadership has led India to victories in tournaments like the SAFF Championship and Intercontinental Cup.

Why He Stands Out:

- Third-highest active international goal-scorer globally, trailing only Cristiano Ronaldo and Lionel Messi.
- Recipient of the prestigious Khel Ratna Award in 2021.
- A veteran presence in the ISL, guiding Bengaluru FC to multiple titles.

Fun Fact: Chhetri is one of the few Indian players to have played in Europe, featuring for Sporting CP in Portugal.

2. Gurpreet Singh Sandhu – India's Wall in Goal

Widely regarded as the best goalkeeper in India, Gurpreet Singh Sandhu is a towering figure at 198 cm, combining agility and sharp reflexes to guard the net. Playing for Bengaluru FC, Sandhu has been instrumental in India's defensive solidity, especially in the AFC Asian Cup 2024.

Why He Stands Out:

- Consistent performances in the ISL and international matches.
- A key figure in India's clean-sheet records in recent tournaments.
- A role model for aspiring goalkeepers in India.

3. Lallianzuala Chhangte – The Rising Star

Lallianzuala Chhangte has emerged as one of the [best football players in India in 2025](#), thanks to his electrifying pace and goal-scoring ability. Playing for Mumbai City FC, Chhangte's flair on the wing has made him a fan favorite and a key player for the national team.

Why He Stands Out:

- Named among the top performers in the ISL 2023-24 season.
- A versatile winger with a knack for creating and finishing chances.
- Recognized as a Promising Player in the AIFF Awards.

4. Anirudh Thapa – The Midfield Maestro

Anirudh Thapa is a rising star in Indian football, known for his vision and passing in midfield. Playing for Mohun Bagan Super Giant, Thapa's ability to control the game's tempo has earned him a spot among the best football players in India.

Why He Stands Out:

- A dynamic midfielder with excellent ball distribution.
- Regular starter for the Indian national team.
- Praised for his work rate and leadership on the field.

5. Ashique Kuruniyan – The Speedster

Ashique Kuruniyan's explosive pace and versatility make him a standout player. Whether playing as a winger or full-back, his contributions for both club and country have cemented his place among India's elite footballers.

Why He Stands Out:

- Key player in the ISL for ATK Mohun Bagan.
- Known for his relentless energy and attacking flair.
- A vital cog in India's attacking setups.

6. Manvir Singh – The Clutch Performer

Manvir Singh's knack for [live football scoring](#) crucial goals has made him a household name. His performances for ATK Mohun Bagan and the national team highlight his importance to Indian football.

Why He Stands Out:

- Consistent goal-scoring in the ISL.
- A reliable forward in high-pressure matches.
- Growing influence in India's attacking line.

7. Vishal Kaith – The Rising Goalkeeper

Vishal Kaith is another goalkeeper making waves in 2025. Playing for Jamshedpur FC, his shot-stopping abilities have earned him recognition as one of the best football players in India.

Why He Stands Out:

- Stellar performances in the ISL 2023-24 season.
- A strong contender to succeed Gurpreet Singh Sandhu.
- Known for his composure under pressure.

8. Sandesh Jhingan – The Defensive Rock

Sandesh Jhingan's commanding presence in defense has made him a cornerstone of the Indian national team. His leadership and tackling prowess make him one of the best football players in India.

Why He Stands Out:

- A dominant center-back for FC Goa.
- Key to India's defensive stability in international tournaments.
- A vocal leader on and off the pitch.

9. I.M. Vijayan – The Legendary Inspiration

Though retired, I.M. Vijayan's legacy continues to inspire. Voted among the greatest Indian footballers by fans, his contributions to the sport remain unmatched.

Why He Stands Out:

- A pioneer of modern Indian football.
- Known for his flair and goal-scoring prowess in the 1990s.
- A mentor for young footballers today.

10. Bhaichung Bhutia – The Iconic Trailblazer

Bhaichung Bhutia, fondly called the "Sikkimese Sniper," is another legend whose influence persists. His international stints and leadership laid the foundation for modern Indian football.

Why He Stands Out:

- First Indian to play professionally in England (Bury FC).
- Instrumental in popularizing football in India.
- A role model for aspiring footballers.

The Future of Indian Football in 2025

The best football players in India are not just competing locally but are also catching the eye on the global stage. With the Indian Super League fostering talent and the national team improving its FIFA rankings, 2025 promises to be a landmark year. Young players like Lallianzuala Chhangte and Anirudh Thapa, alongside veterans like Sunil Chhetri, are paving the way for a brighter future.

Trending Topics in Indian Football for 2025

- AIFF Awards 2024-25: Celebrating the best talents in Indian football.
- AFC Asian Cup Impact: India's participation in 2024 boosted player confidence.
- Youth Development: Academies producing the next generation of stars.
- ISL's Global Reach: Attracting international coaches and players to India.

Conclusion

While Sunil Chhetri remains the **best football player in India** due to his unmatched goal-scoring record and leadership, players like Gurpreet Singh Sandhu, Lallianzuala Chhangte, and Anirudh Thapa are not far behind. The blend of experience and youth in Indian football is creating a dynamic landscape, making 2025 an exciting year for fans.

Who's your favorite Indian footballer? Share your thoughts in the comments and stay tuned for more updates!!